

The Exit Interview

The ever-growing question these days seem to be, “How do we hold on to our employees?”

The exit interview is an interview given to a departing employee. This is usually done for employees that voluntarily quit instead of those that are fired or laid off. Exit interviews offer a fleeting opportunity to find out information that otherwise might be more difficult or impossible to obtain. Interviews can be conducted orally or in writing; however, oral interviews are more effective as a rule. A good exit interview is well thought out and includes information a company would like to obtain. Take notes of the high points; get the general idea – it is not essential to get exact quotes. It is more important to listen than to write. Then make use of the information gathered to create and establish effective workplace initiatives. If you don't use this new information, then why do an exit interview?

The following are some thoughts to consider when conducting an exit interview:

1. Think carefully about the information you would like to get before the interview. This greatly increases the odds of a successful interview.
2. Save the hardest questions for the latter part of the interview. Work up to the tough stuff!
3. A good question to break the ice is “would you like to use us as a reference/recommendation?” Do not make this offer if you would not recommend the employee!
4. Be prepared for some bombshells. Expect the unexpected – if it ever is to happen it will happen in an exit interview.
5. Carefully select the interviewer. Look for someone that listens well and is open-minded. It serves no purpose for the interviewer to get into an argument with the departing employee.
6. Throughout the interview stay focused on the employee!
7. Look for open-ended questions that allow for plenty of expression. An example of this might be "How did you feel you were managed during your employment with us?" or "How do you feel the company is run?"
8. Other excellent questions are “Under what conditions would you have stayed?” and “If you had had a magic wand, what would you have changed?”
9. At some point in the interview ask, “Why are you leaving?” if you do not already know.
10. Good general questions are “what did you like most (least) about your position?”
11. Try to find out if there are things the departing employee would suggest to improve conditions, production or morale.
12. Try to get a good feel for how they viewed their compensation and benefits package.
13. Leave room at the end of the interview for general comments.

The exit interview provides you with a good mechanism to take a hard look at how your company is perceived. Since the employee is leaving, they will often be more open and frank in their discussions about the company.

Those companies that do not conduct exit interviews miss out on a great opportunity!

Reduce employee turnover, improve employee retention and measure the success of your workplace initiatives.

Exit Interview

EMPLOYEE NAME: _____ DATE: _____

TITLE OR FUNCTION: _____ DEPT: _____

What did you like best about your current position? _____

What did you like least about your current position? _____

What did you like best about the company? _____

What did you like least about the company? _____

What are your feelings about your supervisor? _____

Why are you leaving the company at this time? What company and position are you going to (if applicable)? _____

What comments do you have about the company's salary and benefits? _____

Exit Interview, continued

What suggestions do you have for improvement of your current position, or other aspects within the company? _____

What other comments would you like to make? _____

Interview conducted by: _____ on _____

Interviewer's remarks: _____

Reviewed by: Supervisor: _____ on _____

Next Level Supervisor: _____ on _____

Reviewed by President: _____ on _____